



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on International Humanitarian Law and the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security

The Member States of the European Union welcome the distinguished speakers Brigadier General Jan Peter Spijk and Dr. Petra Ditrichová Ochmannová to the FSC and thank them for their comprehensive and interesting presentations.

We remain strong supporters of the OSCE Code of Conduct and attach great importance to the full implementation of its norms and principles, including those related to respecting international humanitarian law. We believe that the implementation of the Code of Conduct should be further strengthened and additional efforts are needed in order to improve the overall quality of reporting.

In this respect we would like to express our thanks for the information provided today by the representative of the CPC on the Peer Review Seminar on the Code of Conduct which took place in RACVIAC early this month which provided a very useful framework for discussion and exchange of experience on issues related to implementation of the Code among OSCE participating States in a regional setting.

We will continue to support the efforts of the FSC Chair, the Secretariat and the FSC Co-ordinator on the Code of Conduct to address issues related to improving deficiencies in implementing and reporting on the Code of Conduct as well as outreach activities in promoting the principles and norms stipulated in the Code of Conduct also outside the OSCE area.

As rightly stated by the distinguished speakers, democratic control of armed and security forces, protection of human rights of armed forces personnel and adhering to

the norms of IHL are key elements creating a framework in which armed forces operate.

All EU Member States are Parties to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and thus under the obligation to abide by their rules. The EU is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. This includes the goal of promoting compliance with IHL.

The European Union is a major advocate for International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian principles. It continues to implement the EU Guidelines on International Humanitarian Law, adopted in 2005 and updated in 2009, which promote compliance with International Humanitarian Law by third states and non-state actors.

We share the view of the distinguished speakers that IHL training is a key prerequisite for improving compliance with IHL. That is why the EU provides staff training on International Humanitarian Law and is funding training and education in International Humanitarian Law in third countries including within the framework of broader rule of law programmes. Training in IHL is necessary to ensure compliance with IHL in time of armed conflict. Training and education must also be undertaken in peacetime. This applies to the whole population, with a special attention to relevant groups such as law enforcement officials and military personnel. In addition, reflecting the relevant aspects of international law, including International Humanitarian Law is one of principles on which the EU training policy in CSDP is based. This policy is aimed at creating a European security culture under the CSDP and meeting crisis management operational needs in both civilian and military fields.

Finally, since the Parliamentary Assembly meets in Vienna almost as we speak, let us commend once again the continued interest and efforts of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in promoting and supporting implementation of the Code of Conduct. We highly appreciate initiatives to strengthen both the internal coherence of the OSCE executive structures' activities and the co-operation of the OSCE with its Partners for Cooperation as well as parliamentarians as key stakeholders of the

Code of Conduct. In this regard we look forward to the outcomes of the conference on the Code of Conduct to be held in Berlin in June this year.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.